(c) All the remaining villages are proposed to be provided with telecom facility progressively by March 2002 with the joint efforts of Private Basic Service Operators(PBSOs).

Supply of Fibre Optic Board Based Network

187. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways, Power Grid and Organisations like Enron and Reliance also plan to supply fibre optic board based network; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The National Telecom Policy '99 envisages the usage of existing backbone network of public and private power transmission companeis/Railways/GAIL/ONGC for national long distance communications. As regards the plan to supply fibre optic board based network by organisations like Enron, Reliance, it is stated that no such reference has been received in the department for the purpose.

Printing of Postal Stamps

†188. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the types of various postal stamps printed during the last three years;

(b) the number of stamps printed in the security press of Government out of above;

(c) whether some of the stamps were printed from somewhere else if so, the names thereof;

(d) the total cost incurred on the printing of postal stamps in Government and private presses; and

(e) whether the security press in Pune is lying closed alongwith the reasons for delay in the repairing work of the same?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) In the last three years, the Department of Posts printed three types of postage stamps—definitive postage stamps for regular postage usage and service postage stamps for use by government departments. In addition for philatelic purposes, to commernorate specific events/ institutions/personalities and to focus on the country's natural/cultural heritage/ its multifaceted biodiversity, 200 commemorative/special postage stamps were issued.

(b) The total number of stamps printed during the period is given below:

Year	Definitive (in sheets)	Service postatge (in sheets)
1997-98	3,80,53,000	51,32,000
1998-99	7,80,19,000	1,08,39,000
1999-2000	6,04,74,000	1,59,56,000

Definitive stamps are of denomination 10P, 15P, 25P, 50P, 100P, 200P, 300P, 500P, 1000P, 2000P, & 5000P and Services Postage stamps are of denomination 50P, 100P, 200P, 300P, 500P, 1000P, 2000P & 5000P.

During 1997—1999, 200 commemorative postage stamps were issued. Out of them, 179 stamps were printed by Government Security Press. Commemorative/special postage stamps are printed in limited nos.—4/7/10 lakh stamps, depending on the anticipated philatelic demand.

(c) During 1997—99, 21 stamps were printed by approved private security printer—M/s Calcutta Security Printers Limited, Kanpur (U.P.).

(d) The rates for printing of commemorative postage stamps by Government Security Press is being worked out by the Cost accounts Branch, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance. Provisional payment is being made at rates worked out in consultation with Department of Economic Affairs, India Security Press, Nashik subject to adjustment at a later date:

1. Single colour stamps per issue sheet. — Rs. 10/-
2. Double colour stamps per issue sheet. — Rs. 18/-
3. Multiple colour stamps per issue sheet. — Rs 22/-

The cost of printing through private security printers is as below:

1.	One colour	—	Rs. 3.50/- per issue sheet.
2.	Two/Three colour sheet	—	Rs. 4.40/- per issue sheet.
3.	Four/Five colour sheet	—	Rs. 5.25/- per issue sheet
4.	Six/Seven/Eight colour	—	Rs. 6.00/- per issue sheet

(e) The India Security Press, Nashik (not at Pune) is not closed. However, the multi-colour photogravure stamp printing machine called 'Rambrant' which is used by the press for printing of commemorative postage stamps is out of order. The India Security Press authority is reported to be taking necessary action for repairing the same in consultation with Ministry of Finance.

Free Telephone Connections to the Employees of DoT

189. SHRI K. C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of employees of Department of Telecommunications and Telecom Services to be provided telephone connections free of cost in Karnataka;

(b) the number of free calls to be provided to these employees (bi-monthly); and

(c) whether Government would ensure that the persons in the waiting list will not be affected by this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, a decision has been taken to extend certain concessions to the employees of Telecom Department in obtaining a private telephone connection. The approximate number of employees eligible to get concession in Karnataka Circle is 22,936. However, no orders have been issued so far as there is an interim stay granted by the Hon'ble Kerala High Court.

(b) The number of bi-monthly free calls admissible to these employees will be 250 calls in rural areas and 150 calls in urban area.

(c) Since the telephone connections will be obtained by the employees in private capacity, these will be provided to the employees in accordance with the prevailing priority in the respective area of exchange and will not affect the persons in the waiting list.